



# Our answer to new challenges: "Power of We"

I didn't think much about the theory and history of the union movement when I was a new elementary teacher in the Centennial schools. I just wanted to grow in my practice, create a welcoming classroom and provoke a few more of those "aha!" moments when my sixth-grade students suddenly got "it."

I came to understand my union was the best vehicle for taking me where I wanted to go only after a friend had persuaded me to become active in my local. For example, our teams negotiated contracts that protected educators' planning time, put decisions about professional development back into the hands of teachers and ensured every educator in the district received a peer coach.

Those were all concrete steps that made me a better teacher, which in turn benefitted my students that year and the next. Those policies were also inconvenient for the district. Educators won out over centralized job training and reduced planning time because we supported each other. We were unified, we showed it and we won.

I keep the memory of those local victories in mind when I look to the horizon and see the storm coming. The DeVoses, Waltons, Kochs and other billionaire families, with their sprawling networks of foundations and think tanks, lawyers and lobbyists, ad firms and media channels, are coming after Education Minnesota and labor unions everywhere.



Denise Specht, president

We can take some comfort in knowing this isn't a new fight. A certain strain of wealthy people in America have always opposed labor unions, women's rights, civil rights and government in general. Lately, they are growing more focused on unions of educators. It's no surprise. We're mostly women who work for the public good and advocate for fair treatment for everyone. There's really not much about us for them to like. (I'm OK with that, by the way.)

We can take some comfort in the fact the oligarchs now hire attorneys to file lawsuits instead of Pinkertons with revolvers as they did in the 1890s, but their goal remains the same. Without unions, it will be much easier for them to manipulate the rules to protect an economy that's out of balance for most working people. They want to silence educators and turn public schools and colleges into private profit centers, and our students into commodities.

Consider the National Right to Work Legal Defense

Foundation, which has filed lawsuits in Minnesota and other states designed to cripple labor unions. According to the Center for Media and Democracy, the foundation has deep ties to the John Birch Society, which Fred Koch (father of Charles and David) helped found. At least four of the foundation's current attorneys worked for the Charles Koch Institute, a think tank associated with the Koch family foundations, according to the institute's website.

Because this conflict between the very, very wealthy few and the rest of us goes back generations, we can look back to see how we can go forward. Just like my first personal encounter with union power back in Centennial, the key has always been unity. As the old-time union slogan goes, "Each for himself is the boss's plea, unity of all is the worker's plea."

Education Minnesota is calling our new unity campaign the Power of We. Our two goals are to ensure every member of Education Minnesota sees the value of belonging to our union. And we're asking every member to show it by signing a membership renewal form by Dec. 31.

We will be talking about the campaign frequently over the next few months, and those conversations will be a little different in every local. We're a union of more than 80,000 smart people, and there will always be different priorities and opinions. That's fine, but here are four reasons I would give for signing the

renewal form:

**1. Education Minnesota is a voice for professional educators.** When educators speak with one, strong voice, every political leader from Aurora to Zumbrota knows where we stand. Without us, they would lose the shared experience, training and expertise of thousands of educators. Imagine if we were silent. It would harm every school, campus and student in Minnesota.

**2. Education Minnesota creates better working conditions for educators.** Minnesota educators have better pay, pensions and working conditions than educators in many other states. Why? Because previous generations of educators came together and fought for them. Their legacy includes our pensions and the job protections that let us fearlessly advocate for students.

**3. Education Minnesota is the best advocate for our profession.** Being part of Education Minnesota means you care about improving your practice. Members of our union have access to valuable training for educators, by educators. We help our colleagues maintain our licenses and grow as professionals. And we are there in the tough times, because anyone can have a bad day and need someone to lean on.

**4. Education Minnesota is a champion for our students, communities and families.** Organized educators in Minnesota have stood for civil rights for more than 150 years. It's true. Educators

voted for equal pay for equal work at one of our very first meetings in 1862. The structure of our union has changed since then, but we're still pushing for a better Minnesota. We're still fighting the racism, discrimination and poverty that holds back too many of our students.

There will be educators who don't see the connection between these old fights and high ideals and the work they do every day. That is understandable. I didn't see the links when I was starting out, but they are definitely there for anyone willing to look.

I hope that in the next few months our conversations will show the Power of We in making progress on both the big issues and the everyday challenges in our districts. Standing together will help us both spread social justice and win everyday improvements in our districts—like useful professional development, carving out a few more minutes to plan a good lesson and building the learning conditions that allow us to create more of those "aha!" moments we all work for.

It won't be easy, but in the words of the great Dolly Parton, "The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain."

I know we can get there ...

Together,

Twitter: @DeniseSpecht

## What could your school do if the Legislature funded schools properly?

"Oh, wow! The question is, "what \*couldn't\* we do?". If the Legislature funded schools properly, my school would be able to accomplish so much more! Firstly, we would be able to hire more teaching staff so that teacher-to-student ratios could be improved. We would also be able to purchase more books so that reading interests of all students could be met. Finally, we would be able to increase supplemental support in such forms as after-school tutoring programs. As educators, we have—by sad necessity—become so proficient at

creating quality classrooms on severely limited budgets. With increased funding, our goal of educating all young people would become that much easier to attain."

*Debbie Cain, Fridley Education Association*

"If the Legislature funded schools properly, our school could lower class sizes and increase student support services to meet the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of our diverse students."

*Melissa Williams, Education Richfield*

"If the Legislature could fund schools properly, schools would be able to lower class sizes, add additional courses at the middle and high school levels and give ample time to educators to plan and carry out creative projects that would benefit the students."

*Jodi Prchal, New Prague Education Association*

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# Governor signs education bill, says teacher licensing worth more negotiations

Gov. Mark Dayton signed into law an education funding bill and used his line-item veto to pressure the Legislature to renegotiate parts of a teacher licensure overhaul that would significantly lower standards.

“Gov. Mark Dayton knows what bargaining in bad faith looks like and today he called the legislative negotiators on it,” said Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota. “We agree with the governor that the people of Minnesota deserve better than sneak attacks, last-minute tricks and poison pills. Any teacher would grade their work ‘unsatisfactory.’”

The Minnesota Legislature wrapped up its special session May 26, passing an education bill with barely inflationary funding increases and harmful changes to teacher licensing and layoff regulations. The bill lacks necessary fixes to the state’s pension fund for teachers.

The education bill passed the House by a 76-54 vote and the Senate 34-28. Dayton signed it May 30. This bill devalues the profession, allows people with little to no training to teach our children and makes it harder to recruit and retain quality educators. The bill includes:

- \$467.8 million in new spending for preschools through high school—about \$167 million more than a bill vetoed by Dayton in early May. About three-quarters of the new funding—\$367 million—will go toward a 2 percent annual increase over the biennium on the per-pupil formula. The bill spends another \$50 million on school readiness, which districts may use for public preschool, and another \$20 million for preschool vouchers.
- Teacher licensing standard changes that give school districts too much authority to hire people with much less teacher training. People can receive an unlimited teaching license without any teacher preparation training—essentially allowing someone to teach for their entire career without any training on how to teach.
- No changes to the Teachers Retirement Association to improve the long-term stability

of the pension. TRA’s board offered a balanced solution that would maintain a reliable, sustainable pension for current and future generations of teachers.

- The removal of baseline language for unrequested leaves of absence for teachers during times of budget trouble. When union and district negotiators couldn’t agree on a local system for layoffs, the default in law was based on seniority and licensure area. This default was created because it protected teachers from arbitrary or vindictive dismissals. Layoff language is now up for negotiation, without the familiar safety net.
- \$106 million in new funding for Minnesota State and \$54.6 million for the University of Minnesota. The two college and university systems also received a total of \$145 million to update buildings and infrastructure.

Fortunately, proposals to offer back-door vouchers to private schools and to eliminate key provisions that help increase competition and transparency in the insurance bidding process for schools didn’t happen this session.

The education budget bill, though, also lacked additional funding for full-service community schools, special education and student support services.

Even though he still had concerns, Dayton said he signed all the state budget bills into law to avoid a state government shutdown. But he line-item vetoed funding for the House and Senate, hoping Republican legislative leaders would come back to the negotiating table on taxes, drivers licenses for undocumented immigrants and changes to the new teacher licensing system.

House and Senate Republicans said they weren’t interested in revisiting the budget bills and instead filed a lawsuit asking a judge to overturn Dayton’s veto of the Legislature’s funding.

The lawsuit, filed June 13 in Ramsey County District Court, claims Dayton’s constitutional line-item veto power doesn’t allow him to defund the Legislature. It also asks for an immediate order letting legislators and staff get paid.

## LEGISLATURE DUCKS FIXES TO TEACHER PENSION FUND

State lawmakers left the Capitol this session without making much-needed changes to teacher pensions to improve the long-term stability of the plan.

This was the second year the Teachers Retirement Association’s board offered a balanced proposal to maintain a reliable, sustainable pension for current and future generations. It included increasing the amount that school districts would contribute to teachers’ pensions, with state funding to help pay for the increase, and reducing cost of living adjustments for retirees.

Unfortunately, Republican leaders in the Legislature held educators’ pensions hostage in the end-of-session negotiations. They removed the TRA portion from the pension bill, which Gov. Mark Dayton eventually vetoed.

So what does this all mean? The Legislature’s failure to act means TRA’s pension funding gap—or inability to pay future obligations—will grow. TRA currently can fund about 70 percent of its projected pension obligations because new data show teachers are living longer than they once did.

Contributions must increase to close that gap. But some lawmakers and interest groups want more of the financial burden to fall on teachers by increasing their contribution rate, reducing their retirement benefits and increasing the retirement age.

Education Minnesota will fight to make sure promises made are promises kept for current and future educators’ pensions. Chipping away at pensions will only drive more people away from the profession and make Minnesota’s dire teacher shortage even worse.

## Major changes to Minnesota’s teacher licensure system

The 2017 legislative session ended with passage of new laws that will dramatically change Minnesota’s teacher licensure system and the board that oversees and administers that system.

The new law means Minnesota is adopting a tiered licensure system. Once the transition is completed, all teachers in Minnesota’s public and charter schools will have one of the following licenses:

- Tier 1
- Tier 2
- Tier 3
- Tier 4
- Short-call substitute license
- Long-call substitute license
- Lifetime substitute license

### Transition timeline

After July 1, 2018, all new applicants who meet eligibility requirements for teaching licenses will be placed into the new tiered system. During the 2018-2019 school year, all teachers who have current professional five-year licenses that are up for renewal will move to a Tier 4 license at the time of that renewal. During that same year, those teachers with professional licenses that are not yet up for renewal will be automatically moved to a Tier 4 license, though the renewal date on the new Tier 4 license will be identical to the renewal date on their original license.

### General Overview of Tiers

The Tier 1 license is designed for educators who are now captured under the language of the non-licensed community expert, or NLCE. Minnesota schools will still have NLCEs in schools in the

2017-2018 school year, but starting July 1, 2018, that category will be replaced by the Tier 1 license. Candidates for a Tier 1 license will need a BA degree if teaching in any field other than career and technical education. Tier 1 teachers will not be in the teacher bargaining unit and will not accumulate years of probationary status.

The Tier 2 license will be the designation for teachers trained in other states who are still working on Minnesota-specific requirements for Tiers 3 and 4, teachers already in classrooms while currently enrolled in teacher preparation programs, and other teachers who have some combination of teaching experience and teacher preparation. Tier 2 teachers will be in the teacher bargaining unit but will not accumulate years of probationary status.

The Tier 3 license is the first license that will be issued to teachers trained in Minnesota teacher preparation programs or in other states that meet Minnesota’s requirements and who have passing scores on content and pedagogy exams. These teachers are in the teacher bargaining unit and must complete three years of successful teaching as probationary teachers. If a teacher got to Tier 3 via Tier 2, then up to two years of successful teaching at Tier 2 can be credited toward the Tier 3 teacher’s three-year probationary requirement. This license will be eligible for unlimited renewals and must be renewed every three years.

The Tier 4 license is the designation for all teachers who have a current five-year, professional license when this transition occurs. Going forward, requirements for a Tier 4 license include all of the requirements for Tier 3, a minimum of three years of teaching in Minnesota, passing scores on the basic skills exam (or one of the alternatives approved by the board), and evidence that the most recent teacher evaluation did not place the teacher on an

improvement plan pursuant to teacher development and evaluation law. These teachers will be in the bargaining unit. Tier 4 licenses will be eligible for unlimited renewals and must be renewed every five years.

### License renewals

The new legislation changes licensure renewal requirements, and it requires the new Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board, or PELSB, to adopt rules for that process. One change that we know is coming for the renewal of Tier 3 and Tier 4 licenses is that starting in the 2018-2019 school year, individual teachers applying for renewal can include teacher evaluations as evidence of successful teaching. Another change for those holding Tier 3 or Tier 4 licenses is that professional development focused on cultural competency will be a requirement at the time of renewal. Look to future publications for more information as the PELSB clarifies expectations for renewal through the rule-making process.

### Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board

As of Jan. 1, 2018, the Minnesota Board of Teaching will be replaced by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board. Currently, the Board of Teaching, or BOT, establishes the rules and standards for teacher licensure, while the licensing division at the Minnesota Department of Education issues the actual licenses. Going forward, all licensing duties will be moved to this new PELSB. This new board will also be the body to consider teacher disciplinary issues. Education Minnesota is working closely with staff at MDE and the BOT in order to ensure as smooth a transition as possible for our members.

# Roseville teacher brings connections into union, classroom work

Maria Le can remember the exact moment when she decided to become a teacher and the reason why.

“No one ever looked like me in education,” she said. “I wanted to make a connection with my education. I wanted to go into it to show students who looked like me that they could go into education too.”

Le is a third-grade teacher at Central Park Elementary in Roseville and is Minnesota’s nominee for the National Education Association Foundation’s Award for Teaching Excellence. The NEA Foundation Awards for Teaching Excellence recognize, reward, and promote excellence in teaching and advocacy for the union.

Le is an executive board member of Education Minnesota-Roseville, works with Education Minnesota’s professional advocacy committee, teachers of color forums and MEA Facing Inequities and Racism in Education (FIRE) program. She was also a finalist for the Minnesota Teacher of the Year award in 2016.

While it was the search for a connection that got her into teaching, making connections is also what keeps Le in the profession.

“My students keep me in the profession, but also my

union,” she said. “I feel the support, especially since there has been more of a drive for racial equity professional development. That’s what the students need. I was able to make connections and seek out what Education Minnesota was offering, I was able to network at the state level with others who have similar experiences as I do.”

Le has been able to build on those connections and do things to help students and her colleagues. She has lobbied and testified at the state Capitol on numerous issues and worked on Education Minnesota’s Educator Policy Innovation Center (EPIC) report on recruitment and retention of educators.

“It just took me saying I wanted to get involved,” she said. “The work keeps me here because it reminds me of my moral imperative—it’s because of the kids. The work of the union actually impacts that.”

The union is also helping Le with a classroom project.

She and the school’s art specialist, Mark Tinsley, were awarded a classroom grant from Education Minnesota’s Foundation for Excellence in Teaching and Learning this year and will implement their “Diversity and STEAM

Integration Project” in the 2017-18 school year.

Le and Tinsley are going to partner with a genetics company, 23 and Me, to do saliva testing on students to determine their ancestry. With parent permission, the students will submit a saliva sample and then learn as much as possible about the genetic makeup of their family.

“We are the most diverse school in Roseville with a high immigrant population, including refugee and immigrant families and African-American families who have experienced historical trauma,” Le said. “We want to fill in the absent narratives. We might uncover some things that are uncomfortable, but we will find that there’s a lot more to how we’re interconnected than how society tells us.”

Tinsley will integrate the findings in his art class to talk about skin color and how they all mix, as well as what represents gender identity and beauty. Le will use the results to focus on social studies and how people have moved around the world, science and what DNA is and how scientists use it, literacy and writing personal narratives and math to do charts, graphs and track who we actually are.



Maria Le works with students on MCA test prep during an after-school program this spring. Le is Minnesota’s nominee for the NEA Foundation’s Award for Teaching Excellence.

“We hope to really involve the families,” she said. “They will have access to see if there is other family around the world they might not know about or to just learn a little more about who they are. Even if kids don’t get the DNA test, they can still learn and get involved by putting together a family tree.”

When it comes to the foundation and other opportunities to get involved, Le looks at the union and its work as an iceberg.

“There is a lot more that

the union can offer than you see above the surface,” she said.

Le encourages all educators to look below that surface and see how the union can help you in your daily life.

“Go to the MEA convention. Even if you go once in your career, it’s worth it. Be willing to ask questions. Go to a board meeting,” she said. “I would never have been able to do some of the things I have done without the union.”

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# Volunteer at the Education Minnesota State Fair booth

The 2017 Minnesota State Fair returns Aug. 24-Sept. 4.

Every year, Education Minnesota member volunteers and staff produce personalized photo calendars for visitors at our booth in the Education Building on Cosgrove Street near the Snelling Avenue entrance.

Shifts are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Sign up today to get the date and time you want by going to [www.educationminnesota.org/events/state-fair-booth/state-fair](http://www.educationminnesota.org/events/state-fair-booth/state-fair). Only days with open slots will be listed.

The booth is open 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Shifts include taking digital photos and acting as Education Minnesota ambassadors to fairgoers.

In 2016, members produced more than 14,000 calendars for booth visitors.

Shifts are three hours long; volunteers receive an admission ticket and T-shirt.

In addition to the photo calendar, the booth also features a different education group every day of the fair showcasing their curriculum area or program.

To check out the booth setup, what volunteers do and the fun everyone has at the fair, find photos from previous years on Education Minnesota's Flickr page, [www.flickr.com/photos/educationminnesota/albums](http://www.flickr.com/photos/educationminnesota/albums) and look for the State Fair albums.



## Play *from page 1*

effect.” The study shows that in pretend play, children perform cognitively as if they are a full year older. Looking at something from a hero's perspective, they tend to be more controlled and objective.

“Executive function is the best indicator of achievement in third grade,” said Smith. “And that looks like play in kids.”

Play can easily be integrated into the classroom in a developmentally appropriate way, said Smith.

The “Crisis in the Kindergarten” report said that in a healthy kindergarten, play does not mean “anything goes.”

“It does not deteriorate into chaos. Nor is play so tightly structured by adults that children are denied the opportunity to learn through their own initiative and exploration. Kindergartners need a balance of child-initiated play in the presence of engaged teachers and more focused experiential learning guided by teachers,” says the report.

Smith and other educators across the state are fighting for the time to play in their classrooms and, more and more, they are winning the battle.

“Educators have the right to advocate for what is developmentally appropriate for the ages of kids they are teaching,” Smith said. “Just like we don't ask 10th graders to sit in elementary age chairs.”

One of the educators pushing for play at the earliest learning stages is Rebecca Gamache, a home-based Head Start teacher in Duluth.

Gamache was teaching preschool in Superior, Wisconsin, when she first saw the change to a more academic-focused curriculum.

“The children weren't learning deep foundational concepts, they were learning memorization,” she said. “We were missing out on creativity and curiosity. They



are such concrete learners that adult-learning concepts are abstract to kids.”

Gamache says she understands why the move away from play happened, because it's easier to collect data on pen and paper tasks. But if you look at child development, we don't expect that kind of task completion from babies, so why should we expect it from preschoolers, she said.

“With an infant, if your goal is to walk or run, you have a progression,” she said. “First they have to discover their arms and legs, then hold their head up, then roll, then crawl, then pull themselves up, then walk, then run. But when they are older and sitting in front of us, we think they can be a reader.”

Gamache is also the regional representative in Northern Minnesota for Play Empowers, a worldwide group that advocates for play.

“We hear in preschool that kindergarten teachers want self-regulation and social

skills,” she said. “Kids learn that in play. They figure it out. Kids need to have a love of learning and curiosity.”

Anna Dutke, a preschool teacher in Prior Lake-Savage, takes play outdoors in her classroom.

“We have a nature-based preschool program. As much as the weather allows, we're outside,” she said. “It's not really teacher-driven in terms of the curriculum. Our curriculum comes based on the students' interests and what they are learning and talking about outside. We incorporate the early learning standards into that.”

Dutke has six nature preschool classes that fill up in a matter of minutes each year.

“I've never seen so much success as when kids just play together outside. There aren't the materials-focused issues,” she said. “If we come across some spiders, we talk about them and incorporate standards by counting how many they found, what letter sounds you hear

## WHAT TEACHERS CAN DO TO GENERATE HEALTHY, CREATIVE PLAY

From “Crisis in the Kindergarten: Why Children Need to Play in School,” by Edward Miller and Joan Almon, Alliance for Childhood, 2009

### Limit screen time

Encourage parents to limit or eliminate screen time and give children's own imaginations a chance to blossom. Give parents help weaning their children from screens with suggestions on how to handle key times when parents depend on the screen for babysitting. Parents who have gone through this process report that it is painful for a few days or a week but then becomes much easier than they expected. A common remark from such parents: “I never knew what a wonderful child I had.”

### Stimulate imagination

Children need active imaginations to play well. One can feed their imaginations with stories via good books read aloud and storytelling suited to the child's age. Imagination and creativity are also inspired by puppetry and plays, nursery rhymes, poems, songs, instrumental music, painting, modeling, and other art activities.

### Inspire play with real work

Do real work in the presence of children, such as baking bread, cooking, woodworking, and gardening. Many children can be brought into play by first engaging them in real work for 10 or 15 minutes. Then they are inspired to play on their own. The use of the hands in both work and play is highly stimulating to the brain, a large part of which is linked to the hands.

in their name.”

And for Dutke, it all comes back to a passion and love of learning that can be discovered through play and the outdoors.

“We want to see kids have a passion and excitement for school, to see and hear them wonder about things,” she said. “They aren't scared to take guesses about what things are and why they are. It's still age-appropriate. We want to get kids excited about writing and reading, but it's not through forced activities.”

Becky Magnuson, a kindergarten teacher in Forest Lake, asked a group of her students to share why they felt play was important.

Their answers included “It is work, but you don't realize it,” “It helps you make friends,” “It gives you more energy,” “It's not all about working” and “It is fun!”

Smith, Gamache, Dutke and Magnuson all hope that more educators will advocate for play in their classrooms



and help parents advocate as well.

“Play is the equalizer when pre-k is so unequitable,” Smith said. “Kids shouldn't feel like they are behind on the second day of kindergarten. They should know ‘you are welcome here and you know what to do here.’”

# Improving school safety often begins with asking the right questions

LEGAL BRIEFS

Frequently, we receive questions and requests for legal assistance related to violence against school staff. Teachers and paraprofessionals are suffering injuries. ESPs supervising students during recess or while on bus duty are getting hurt. Everyone is concerned about how school safety affects the education environment for all.

We hear about a lack of respect for educators, bad acts with no consequences, administrators doing nothing but simply returning the student back to the classroom, people feeling unsafe, struggles to know who will hold kids accountable, and whether we need to teach kids respect. Does that sound familiar to you?

These are all experiences and frustrations shared by Education Minnesota members at training sessions on staff safety. However, every single participant can also think of a current student who presents challenges, but they want to help. That is the shared value that drives you to do this work. You care about kids. What can we do differently when the current system is not working for students or staff?

A few years ago, I was introduced to ACEs—Adverse Childhood Experiences—and the impact of the associated toxic stress on brain development, education, and health over a lifetime. The science is real; it must not be ignored. The original ACE study completed in the mid-90s demonstrated that a high prevalence of ACEs in an adult population correlated with a wide range of health and social problems in adulthood.

The Minnesota ACE study evaluated the following adverse experiences: physical abuse; sexual abuse; emotional abuse; mental illness of a family member; problematic drinking or alcoholism of a family member; illegal street or prescription drug use by a household member; divorce or separation of a parent; domestic violence toward a parent; and incarceration of a household member. For each one experienced prior to the age of 18, add 1. That is the ACE score. Simple in the description, devastating to experience, and profound in the implications.

More than half of Minnesotans report experiencing more than one

ACE. Twenty-four percent have more than four. In an average Minnesota classroom with 30 students, more than half have an ACE score of one or higher. Two or three of those students have an ACE score of five or higher. Students living in poverty, American Indian, African American, Hispanic, LGBTQ, and students receiving special education services are likely to have much higher ACE scores.

The biology of toxic stress is now understood. Children who undergo a traumatic experience are facing a tiger, so to speak. Their bodies are flooded with stress hormones, such as cortisol, and they experience flight, fight, or freeze. Repeated exposure to traumatic experiences without proper care can alter the child's brain. Eventually, they may be unable to distinguish a real tiger, the trauma, from a paper tiger, the teacher directing their attention. You know these students—they experience a behavioral incident, they lash out, they withdraw. It feels like conscious choice. It probably is not. Until we change the question from, "what's wrong with you" when this happens, to "what

happened to you," we will not change things for these students or in the classroom.

There are options for staff who are injured, including reporting incidents, seeking medical treatment, pursuing workers' compensation benefits, seeking enforcement of school policies, and even contacting local law enforcement. When we provide trainings on the topic of staff safety, we discuss this important information as well. However, the more I listen to the experiences of educators, the more I know that none of those options will really effect change that needs to happen for educators and students to avoid injury or repair harm.

Restorative practice in school includes many different methods, but all share the core principles of building community in which all share an obligation to one another and repairing harm when harm occurs.

Educators in all roles within the school community are critical to helping students learn the difference between the real traumas they have experienced and the experiences that are not true threats, but trigger the same physical and emotional

responses. Educators and the school community can help students learn resilience.

Please join many talented educators and me for related sessions at Summer Seminar. Join sessions that introduce and expand on the principles of trauma-informed education and restorative practices. Engage experienced educators who have a trauma-informed classroom or school and who are using restorative practices to transform relationships and their school community. Also, plan to attend the evening showing of the movie "Paper Tigers" to hear the compelling stories from a trauma-informed alternative high school in Washington.

If you cannot join us at Summer Seminar, look for similar sessions at your fall drive-ins, intermediate organization meetings, and MEA in October. Join the EdCommunity to connect with other educators. Look for notices regarding other professional development opportunities and check out the extensive paper on this topic, all at the Education Minnesota website.

♦ **Jess Anna Glover**

*Glover is an Education Minnesota staff attorney.*

## MEMBERS WANT TO KNOW

Please join us for one of the following FREE workshops:

### Financial/Retirement Planning Essentials

**Tues. 7/11/2017 – TRA/PERA**  
St. Cloud Technical and Community College

**Tues. 7/11/2017 – TRA/PERA**  
Riverland Community College

**Wed. 7/12/2017 – TRA/PERA**  
Prestwick Golf Club

**Mon. 7/17/2017 – TRA/PERA**  
Willmar Conference Center

**Tues. 7/18/2017 – TRA/PERA**  
Crookston Inn & Convention Center

**Thur. 7/20/2017 – TRA**  
Minnesota State College Southeast Technical, Tandiski Center

**Thur. 7/20/2017 – PERA Only**  
Minnesota State College Southeast Technical, Tandiski Center

**Mon. 7/24/2017 – TRA**  
MN Landscape Arboretum

**Mon. 7/24/2017 – PERA Only**  
MN Landscape Arboretum

9:30-10 a.m. –  
Registration/Rolls-Juice-Coffee  
10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. –  
Workshop/Boxed Lunch/Prizes

### Topics Include:

#### Pension

- ▶ Learn how pension benefits are calculated and your payout options.

#### Planning

- ▶ Learn why you may need additional investment strategies and how to accumulate and manage your assets.

#### Protection

- ▶ Learn your financial vulnerability with long term illness and how to protect yourself.

### Financial Planning for Beginners and Next Gen

**Wed. 7/12/2017 – Next Gen**  
Prestwick Golf Club  
Woodbury, MN

**Mon. 7/24/2017 – Next Gen**  
MN Landscape Arboretum  
Chaska, MN

9:30-10 a.m. –  
Registration/Rolls-Juice-Coffee  
10 a.m.-11:30 p.m. –  
Workshop/Boxed Lunch/Prizes

### Topics include:

- ▶ Managing your paycheck.
- ▶ Learn the importance of budgeting and smart debt management techniques.
- ▶ How much will a \$50 per month contribution amount to in 30 years?
- ▶ What is a 403(b) and why should you contribute to one? What is a Roth IRA?
- ▶ How does a Roth work, and is it the best for you?
- ▶ Learn the value of your defined benefit pension and how much of your income it can replace when you retire.

### LIMITED SEATING, RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

RSVP to Deborah Skog at 651-292-4856 or [deborah.skog@edmn.org](mailto:deborah.skog@edmn.org). Please leave your name(s), phone number and which session you would like to attend. Spouses/Guests Welcome.

41 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul, MN 55103 651-292-4856 800-642-4624 [esi.educationminnesota.org](http://esi.educationminnesota.org) [esi@edmn.org](mailto:esi@edmn.org)

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# EDUCATION MINNESOTA OPPORTUNITIES

## MEA FRIDAY RELICENSURE COURSES NOW OPEN TO EDUCATION MINNESOTA MEMBERS ONLY

A big change is coming to the Minnesota Educator Academy's annual professional development conference in October.

Both days of the event have been open to the public, but due to the demand for Friday's relicensure courses, Friday will now be a members-only event. This year's conference will be held Oct. 19-20 at the Saint Paul RiverCentre.

The conference is the state's largest professional development event for educators. The event, sponsored by the union, provides free professional development for educators, by educators. Thursday's workshops, exhibit hall and keynote speaker will still be open to the public.

Friday's workshops start at 9 a.m. and go until 1 p.m. The entire day's offerings focus on the state's relicensure areas.

Some of last year's workshop offerings included Accommodations and Modifications, Student Disengagement, Classroom Management Strategies that Will Increase Instructional Time and Reduce Stress, Digital Storytelling, Supporting Student Socio-Emotional Health and Minnesota Reflections Primary Source Sets.

The demand for Friday's classes has always been high and Education Minnesota wants to make sure its members get the opportunity to attend and receive the continuing education credits they need.

Education Minnesota members are encouraged to register in advance, but same-day registration will be available.

Workshop listings and registration links will be posted in mid-July at [www.educationminnesota.org/events.aspx#mea](http://www.educationminnesota.org/events.aspx#mea).

Education Minnesota will also offer free child care to members both days of the conference.

More information on speakers, workshops, exhibits and child care registration will also be posted on Education Minnesota's website and in future issues of the Minnesota Educator.

### ABOUT THIS PAGE

The Minnesota Educator provides opportunities listings on this page as a member service, highlighting the free and low-cost professional development the union provides. The page also lists conferences, training and resources of possible interest. Readers interested in pursuing an opportunity should check it out carefully. The Educator tries to include only legitimate, useful opportunities that support education practice.

#### To submit an opportunity:

- Send a complete description of your opportunity to [educator@edmn.org](mailto:educator@edmn.org).
- Send your item by the first Friday of the month to be considered for the next month's Opportunities page. Include daytime contact information.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Reading association summer conference

The Minnesota Reading Association is hosting its summer conference July 13 at Hamline University in St. Paul. The conference will feature national literacy experts, such as author, consultant and founding director of the Educator Collaborative, Christopher Lehman. The conference is being held in conjunction with the Hamline University Literacy Institute July 10-13. The registration fee for the conference is \$125 for MRA members or \$140 for non-members.

For more information about the conference or the literacy institute, go to <http://mra.onefireplace.org>.

### Accounting training for high school educators

The Minnesota Society of Certified Public Accountants is hosting a course for high school educators who teach accounting content in their classrooms. The training will take place July 26-28 at the Minnesota Society of CPAs offices in Bloomington. The training is free and educators will receive a \$200 stipend and lunch for attending. The training will focus on daily lesson plans and assignments, pre-written exams, a textbook with notes and PowerPoint presentations, and access to online resources like videos and webcasts.

For more information, go to [www.mncpa.org/apaccounting](http://www.mncpa.org/apaccounting).

### Environmental education annual conference

The Minnesota Association for Environmental Education is hosting its annual conference July 28-30 at Wolf Ridge ELC. The conference will feature workshops and a kayaking excursion at Split Rock Lighthouse, as well as breakout sessions and field trips.

For more information on the conference, go to [www.minnesotae.org](http://www.minnesotae.org).

### Scholarships available for science, technology workshops

Each year the Minnesota Chapter of the AVS, Science and Technology Society sends a secondary school teacher to the Science Educators Workshop at the AVS International Symposium. This year's workshop will take place Oct. 30-31 in Tampa, Florida. The workshop includes training in vacuum technology, a tour of local industry and the opportunity to interact with other STEM teachers

from throughout the nation. The school district where the teacher selected works will receive a vacuum trainer system. The Minnesota chapter of AVS will cover the costs of transportation, hotel, meals and possibly a substitute. The registration deadline is Aug. 15.

For more information or to apply, please go to: [www.avs.org/Education-Outreach/Science-Educators-Workshop](http://www.avs.org/Education-Outreach/Science-Educators-Workshop).

### Two Historical Society workshops offered in August

The Minnesota Historical Society is offering two workshops for educators this August. The first is "War and Remembrance" on Aug. 3, which is aimed at secondary-level educators. The workshop will look at how Americans memorialize war and military service in public and how war gets remembered through the personal stories of veterans. Participants will receive continuing education units (CEUs). "History Fest" will be offered Aug. 8 and is open to all educators. Participants will have a choice of several educator-led sessions, focusing on state, national and world history, as well as assessments and primary sources. Participants will also receive CEUs.

For more information or to register for either of the workshops, go to <http://education.mnhs.org/workshops>.

### GLSEN professional development in your districts

GLSEN, the organization committed to improving the education system for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning students, offers professional development training for school districts. The training features tools that empower K-12 educators to ensure that all youth have access to meaningful educational experiences, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. Financial assistance may be available to qualifying schools, districts and organizations.

For more information about the training or to see what might be available in your area, go to [www.glsen.org/educate/professional-development](http://www.glsen.org/educate/professional-development).

## CLASSROOM RESOURCES

### Free physical education, health toolkit

The Operation FitKids Youth Fitness Curriculum is provided at no cost to health and fitness educators as a public service of the American Council on Exercise (ACE). The curriculum is designed for educators looking to integrate health and fitness into classroom learning. This seven-lesson module was developed to teach the dangers of being overweight and the importance of a healthy and active lifestyle. CE offers age-appropriate curriculum for children in grades 3-5 and 6-8.

For more details or to download the kit, visit [www.acefitness.org/acefit/operation-fit-kids](http://www.acefitness.org/acefit/operation-fit-kids).

### Classroom activities for teaching tolerance

Finding Your Seat on the Bus is one of 57 resources, created by the USC Shoah Foundation, included in the IWitness collection. These resources explore a number of topics, including tolerance, justice, family and standing up for others, and they feature primary source materials like text, video, poems, photos and more. Each activity is built around a video clip of testimony, and they complement a number of subjects, including English, history, and social studies.

To see all of the offerings, go to <http://iwwitness.usc.edu/SFI/Activity>.

### Lakeshore Learning free online lessons, activities

Lakeshore Learning offers educators more than 1,000 free lesson plans and classroom activities on their website. Included in the offerings are lesson plans, printable worksheets, calendars, templates, clip art, craft ideas. Also available online are templates for educators to make their own writing practice worksheets, flash cards, awards and word searches.

To see all of the offerings, go to [www.lakeshorelearning.com/general\\_content/free\\_resources/freeResources.jsp?f=m](http://www.lakeshorelearning.com/general_content/free_resources/freeResources.jsp?f=m).

### Free library of online resources, curriculum

Curriki is an online K-12 library that hosts thousands of educator-vetted, openly licensed, online educational materials that teachers, educators, or other professionals have created and have made freely available to others for use, reuse, adaptation and sharing. Educators can create their own personal resource library. Students and educators can use Curriki Groups to collaborate on projects, curriculum development and district initiatives.

To see all of the offerings, go to [www.curriki.org](http://www.curriki.org).

### Minneapolis Institute of Art online resources

The Minneapolis Institute of Art offers online resources for educators, including looks into different collections and videos. The museum's website offers online learning resources about collections like The Art of Asia, World Ceramics and World Religions in Art, as well as resources about modernism, photographs, prints and drawings from the museum's collection. Online videos feature topics such as modernism, restoring a masterwork and the process of printmaking.

To see all of the online resources, go to <https://new.artsmia.org/discover/online-resources>.

## GRANTS AND AWARDS

### Art program grants

The P. Buckley Moss Foundation for Children's Education has grants available for up to \$1,000 to be awarded in 2017 with the grant monies to be used in 2018-2019 programs. Applications may be made for a grant up to \$1,000 to support a new or evolving program that integrates the arts into educational programming. The purpose is to aid and support teachers who wish to establish an effective learning tool using the arts in teaching children who learn differently. Applications will be accepted only until Sept. 30.

For more information or to apply, go to <http://mossfoundation.org/teacher-art-grants>.

### Computers for Learning program

The U.S. General Services Administration runs the Computers for Learning program, where any school or educational nonprofit organization can receive computer equipment. The program was created by an Executive Order in 1996, saying that the federal government will make sure that all children have access to modern computer technology. Schools and educational nonprofit organizations can fill out registration forms for requesting excess computer equipment. The excess computer equipment becomes available as federal agencies upgrade their existing computer equipment.

For more information or to fill out the registration form, go to [https://computersforlearning.gov/html\\_hp\\_schooleducation.htm](https://computersforlearning.gov/html_hp_schooleducation.htm).